

Voices
from the
GapsApril
Sinclair

“

Growing up reminded me a little bit of Hide and Go Seek. When it was your time to grow up, Nature said, “Here I come, ready or not.” And Nature could always find you.”

— Coffee Will Make You Black

”



Biography

April Sinclair was born and grew up in Chicago during the times of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. As a young black woman during and after these times, she began to take advantage of her experiences along with her artistic talents to become an active member in her community. She has worked for over 15 years in community service programs, has directed a countywide hunger coalition, and has taught reading and writing to inner-city children and youth.

Sinclair has lived in Chicago and Florida, and presently resides in Oakland, California. She has read from her work in progress to large, enthusiastic, multicultural audiences in bookstores and coffeehouses in California for several years. She credits the rich diversity and open-mindedness of the San Francisco Bay Area to her success as a writer in and around this area. In an interview with other San Francisco Bay Area authors, Sinclair remarks, “I’m attracted to the diversity of cultures, intellectual stimulation, and degree of tolerance here. The natural beauty and eclectic mix of people available to discuss ideas with are also incentives for me to write. But the book community here can be a little traditional. I’d like to see it become more innovative, if possible” (June 1997).

Quick Facts

- * Born in 1953
- * African-American novelist and community activist
- * Author of *Coffee Will Make You Black*

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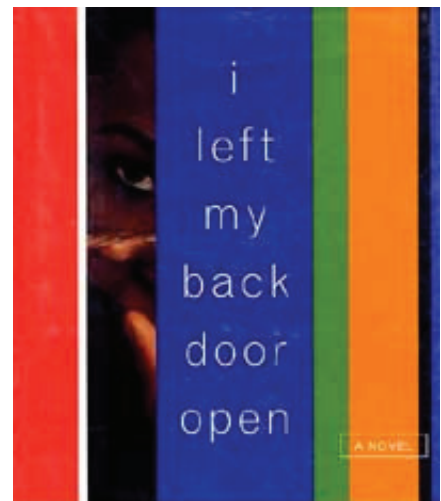
April Sinclair

Biography continued

Sinclair's first major success came with the release of her national bestseller, *Coffee Will Make You Black*, in 1994. The book is set on Chicago's Southside in the mid-to-late 1960s, and is a story of a young black woman, Jean "Stevie" Stevenson, who attempts to confront the prejudice she observes in blacks as well as whites. Sinclair's own childhood experiences may have had an influence on the book's themes of feminism, sexuality, and race.

Sinclair's next major work came in 1995 as a sequel to *Coffee Will Make You Black*, called *Ain't Gonna Be the Same Fool Twice*. Sinclair sends the black, Chicago-raised Stevie to San Francisco, where she experiments with her sexuality and becomes torn between the traditional values she left in Chicago and the liberated life she enjoys in California.

Sinclair also has a new novel, *I Left My Back Door Open*, which also resembles Sinclair's earlier successes, dealing with an African-American woman living in Chicago.



April Sinclair



April Sinclair

Selected Bibliography

Works by the author

I Left My Back Door Open (1999).

Ain't Gonna Be the Same Fool Twice (1995).

Coffee Will Make You Black (1994).

Works in languages other than English

El café te hará Negro, trans. María del Mar Moya (Planeta, 1997).